

SENATOR CULLAN: This would be a change that would say that in those counties that do not contain a city of the first class, which is larger than 10,000 in population, would no longer have to submit information to the Political Accountability and Disclosure Act. In other words, only ten counties in the state...members of the planning commissions in ten counties in the state would have to submit the information. That would be in Douglas County, Lancaster County, and in eight other counties.

SENATOR SIMON: As I understand the rationale behind it, Senator Cullan, and correct me if I'm wrong, the basic reason is that in the larger counties the people would not necessarily know who might have land interests, but in the smaller counties they would. Is that, essentially, true?

SENATOR CULLAN: That is generally true. We're talking about Currently there are no restrictions on a municipal planning commission. Only county planning commissions are required to report. There has been a lot of trouble, recently, with some county planning commissions that have resigned because they do not feel that they should be required to submit this type of information.

SENATOR SIMON: I understand that, Senator Cullan. Let me ask you another question. If I happened to hold some land and, granted, it might be more difficult for me to...I could probably keep it a better secret in Omaha certainly than I could in Alliance, Nebraska. The fact still remains that if I happen to own a number of parcels of real estate, don't you think, regardless of the size, and I could still hide it, I think I could still hide it in a smaller town, it might be a little more difficult but I think it could be done. I could guarantee you that everybody in that town would not know that I owned a lot of real estate. Don't you think that the people have a right to know. If I'm serving on a planning board, as an elected official or as an appointed official, the people have a right to know who is making the decisions on zoning, when I own a lot of land.

SENATOR CULLAN: Well, Senator Simon, I think in Box Butte County, when there are land transactions, most of the people in the neighborhood know what has occurred. I know when a neighbor, five miles away from our farm, buys a piece of land we certainly are aware of it in a very short period of time. I think the communities are small enough that you don't have that type of a problem. Secondly,.... If you'd allow me to answer the question.

SENATOR SIMON: I just want to ask you another question. Do you know who owns every parcel of land in Box Butte County?

SENATOR CULLAN: No, I don't, but that information is available.

SENATOR SIMON: Right. That is the point I'm making. I thank you for your comments, Senator Cullan. The fact does remain that even in the smallest counties people can own land, people can serve on planning commissions, and the people would not know, necessarily, who owned what land. So I think the argument should be made that just because in a larger metropolitan area the people wouldn't know, I think the same thing could be said in a smaller county. I think this would be the first step. I know there were some people down here last year who wanted to see the Accountability Commission done away with. As far as I'm concerned this is just the first step. This is